

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 8 and 15 are pending in the present application. Claims 22-24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Asao et al. (U.S. Publication 2003/0107538, now U.S. Patent 6,809,717, herein “Asao”); and Claims 1, 8 and 15 were indicated as allowed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that Claims 1, 8 and 15 are allowed.

The rejection of Claims 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Asao is rendered moot in view of cancellation of Claims 22-24.

Consequently, in light of the prior indication of allowed claims, the above discussion, and in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding, and this present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request an early action favorable to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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